

**Jim Doyle**  
Governor

**Roberta Gassman**  
Secretary



**State of Wisconsin**  
**Department of Workforce Development**

**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**  
201 East Washington Avenue  
P.O. Box 7946  
Madison, WI 53707-7946  
Telephone: (608) 266-3131  
Fax: (608) 266-1784  
<http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/>  
e-mail: [dwdsec@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:dwdsec@dwd.state.wi.us)

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CONTACT: Dick Jones, Agency Liaison, 608-267-4780

## **Secretary Gassman Cites Career Opportunities in Emerging Biotech Industry, Providing Jobs with Future as National Economy Struggles**

### ***State Labor Secretary visits Anteco Pharma, Lodi start up serving global market***

LODI – In visiting a successful biotech start up company today, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman cited returns on Governor Doyle's Grow Wisconsin investments in people and said they reinforce his efforts to maintain education as a budget priority in addressing a \$5.75 billion state deficit.

"Even with our nation experiencing the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, Dane County remains a biotech hotspot," Secretary Gassman said during a visit to Anteco Pharma. "When Governor Doyle launched Grow Wisconsin in 2003, companies like Anteco Pharma didn't exist. Now with the help of Grow Wisconsin investments, an emerging biotech industry is serving a global market while providing good jobs here at home. The Governor's strategy is a proven success, and it will serve us well now that we face the current national economic crisis and resulting state deficit."

Last year, Governor Doyle and Secretary Gassman announced \$850,000 in Emerging Industry Skills Partnership grants, a training initiative included in Governor Doyle's *Grow Wisconsin – The Next Steps* plan, to build on the success begun in 2003. The Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin received an \$85,000 EISP grant, and Anteco Pharma was among the biotech firms to benefit from the training initiative. Secretary Gassman said such investments in people are critical to Wisconsin's future.

"In the months ahead, Governor Doyle is determined to protect what is most important to our recovery, good schools for our children, health care for those who need it, and police and fire protection for all communities," Secretary Gassman said. "He cut spending among other immediate steps last fall to address the budget shortfall as Wisconsin and more than 40 other states bore the brunt of the deepening national recession. Now all of us must work together, as we have done in the past, to resolve the budget deficit, and then do our part to rebuild our nation's economy under President Obama's recovery and reinvestment plan."

The EISP grant trained 60 workers in jobs in the biotech industry and established a leadership academy to help start up companies meet future workforce needs. Long term employment projections estimate nearly 3,000 job opportunities in the south central region by 2016, nearly double the 8.8% overall employment increase for the region. With short term training or an associate degree, individuals can start as lab assistants or technicians, earning nearly \$8 to \$14 an hour, and advance to better jobs.

Anteco Pharma provides large-scale freeze-drying services to pharmaceutical, diagnostic and specialty food industries. Owners Howard Teeter and Christopher Conlon formed the business in 2004 and received \$93,800 in agricultural development zone tax credits from the state. The firm now has 17 employees and plans to double by the end of the year. Among its products is a wound dressing sold internationally.

Joining Secretary Gassman were Pat Schramm, Executive Director of the South Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, and Laura Strong, President of Quintessence Biosciences, and President of the Wisconsin Biotechnology & Medical Device Association, representing 260 companies in Wisconsin.